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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Public Affairs

Selected Speeches and News Releases

June 20 - June 26, 1991

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MORE FARMERS ARE COTTONING TO USDA COMPUTER PROGRAM

WASHINGTON—More cotton growers are reaping bigger profits—and protecting the environment—with a computer program written by U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists.

The computer program, called the GOSSYM/COMAX system, is now used on “at least 300 and perhaps as many as 500 cotton farms in 15 states,” said Dennis Child with USDA’s Agricultural Research Service. Child, based in Beltsville, Md., is ARS national program leader for computer modeling.

Originally developed in 1984, the system helps cotton growers make decisions such as when to apply fertilizer and irrigation water—and what amounts to apply, said Child. Growers also use the system to determine planting date, plant populations and row spacing.

Kenneth B. Hood, a cotton grower at Sumner, Miss., tried the system on 800 acres in 1986. It worked so well that he switched his entire 5,000 acres to the system last year.

“It’s taken some of the guesswork out of cotton farming, making a big difference to my operation, environmentally as well as economically,” said Hood. “Not only do I apply less fertilizer and water, I use them only according to the cotton’s needs and before the plants become stressed.”

Hood’s neighbor, Frank M. Mitchener, also uses the GOSSYM/COMAX system. Last year, the system predicted that his plants would go into nitrogen stress in August if he didn’t apply nitrogen in mid-July.

“I would never have seen that my cotton needed more fertilizer until August and then it would have been too late to put it on,” Mitchener said. By following its recommendation, he got \$60 more cotton per acre, after costs, than fields that didn’t get the extra fertilizer.

COMAX is an acronym for Cotton Management Expert. Child said the COMAX portion of the computer program is an “expert system.” This means it contains a series of rules, based on actual experiences of growers, that the computer sorts through before making its

recommendations. The system can simulate an entire 150-day growing season in about four minutes on top-of-the-line, IBM-compatible personal computers, said Child.

GOSSYM, the crop simulation portion of the model, comes from cotton's scientific name—*Gossypium*—and the word “simulation.” Scientists from Mississippi State University and Clemson University helped ARS develop the model.

“Our research agency,” said Child, “has developed at least two dozen computer programs that action agencies like USDA’s Soil Conservation Service, consultants and farmers and ranchers now use to boost profits and save the environment.”

“In 1990, there was a significant increase in the number of cotton consultants using the system,” said James M. McKinion, electronics engineer on the ARS Crop Simulation Research team at Starkville, Miss. “Each specialist may advise between 10 and 50 cotton growers. The potential annual benefit, if used on all 15 million acres of cotton grown in the United States, could approach \$2.1 billion,” said McKinion.

Dennis Senft (415) 559-6068

Issued: June 20, 1991

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USDA SEEKS COMMENTS ON PROPOSALS TO AMEND POTATO PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, June 20—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to amend the national Potato Research and Promotion Plan to reflect certain provisions in the 1990 Farm Bill.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service, said the proposed amendments would:

- assess imported potatoes, potato products and seed potatoes at rates levied on domestic potatoes;
- include up to five importers on the National Potato Promotion Board, the program’s administrative body;
- eliminate assessment refund provisions in the plan;
- add Alaska and Hawaii to the states the program covers; and,
- allow importers to vote in referendums, and make the criterion for passage of a referendum a simple majority rather than the current two-thirds majority.

Haley said the proposed amendments, except those on referendums and on adding Alaska and Hawaii to the plan, will be put to referendum of producers and importers within two years, as the Farm Bill requires.

After USDA publishes a final rule amending the plan, a provisional assessment period will begin, terminating after the outcome of the referendum. In this provisional period, 10 percent of the assessments collected both from domestic producers and from importers of potatoes will be escrowed. If the referendum passes, the escrowed funds will revert to the Potato Board. Otherwise, the money will fund producer and importer requests for refunds.

Details of the proposals will appear as a proposed rule in the June 21 Federal Register.

Comments, in triplicate, must be received no later than July 22 by the Docket Clerk, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS, USDA, rm. 2537-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. Copies of the Federal Register announcement and additional information are available from Arthur L. Pease, rm. 2533-S, at the above address; tel. (202) 475-3915.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, June 20—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-4.9) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, June 21, through midnight Thursday, June 27.

Since the adjusted world price (AWP) is above the 1989 and 1990 crop base quality loan rates of 50.00 and 50.27 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rates for the 1989 and 1990 crops of upland cotton during this period are equal to the respective loan rates for the specific quality and location.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates. Because the AWP in effect is above the established loan rate, loan deficiency

payments are not available for 1990-crop upland cotton sold during this period.

Based on data for the week ending June 20, the AWP for upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

Northern Europe Price	81.01
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	14.20
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	2.15
Average U.S. location	0.35
Sum of Adjustments	<u>-16.70</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	64.31 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

Northern Europe Price	81.01
Northern Europe Coarse Count Price	<u>-77.35</u>
	3.66
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	<u>-4.10</u>
	-0.44
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	0.18 cents/lb.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on Thursday, June 27.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954

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USDA SEEKS NOMINATIONS TO THE AMERICAN EGG BOARD

WASHINGTON, June 21—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has asked certified egg producer groups for nominations to fill nine member and nine alternate positions on the American Egg Board for the 1992-93 term.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said 39 producer groups are certified to submit nominations under the egg research and promotion order. Nine members of the current 18-member board will continue serving through 1991, he said.

Nominations are sought for one member and one alternate each from Area 1 (North Atlantic), Area 3 (East North Central) and Area 4 (West North Central); and two members and two alternates each from Area 2 (South Atlantic), Area 5 (South Central) and Area 6 (Western).

The egg research and promotion order provides that certified egg producer organizations within each geographic area can meet jointly to nominate members and alternates. The caucus chairperson in each of the six areas should submit nominations to USDA by Aug. 5.

Individuals who wish to submit their name or any other person's name in nomination may do so through their area certified organizations. To be eligible, nominees must be producers or representatives of producers.

The 18-member board administers the producer-sponsored national research, consumer education and promotion program designed to strengthen the egg industry's position in the marketplace. Egg Board activities are carried out under the program authorized by the Egg Research and Consumer Information Act of 1974, as amended.

Any questions regarding the nominations may be directed to Janice L. Lockard, Chief, Standardization Branch, AMS, USDA, Rm. 3944-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, telephone (202) 447-3506.

Rebecca Unkenholz (202) 447-8998

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USDA ADDS CHEDDAR CHEESE TO DAIRY EXPORT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, June 21—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture John B. Campbell today announced that 41 countries are eligible to receive up to 32,550 metric tons of U.S. cheddar cheese under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP).

Export sales under the DEIP will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses in the form of commodities from the inventory of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. Sales of cheddar cheese will be made through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices.

Allocations are detailed in the table below. These allocations will be valid until Dec. 31, as provided in the invitation for offers. Details of the program will be issued in the near future.

**Quantities of U.S. Cheddar Cheese Eligible for Shipment
with Bonuses to Eligible Countries
under the DEIP**

Country/ Region	Allocation (MT)	Country	Allocation (MT)
Algeria	4,000	Canary Islands	4,000
Cyprus	750	Egypt	5,000
Faroe Islands	100	French Guiana	150
French Polynesia	200	Greenland	100
Jordan	1,000	Malta	1,000
Morocco	500	New Caledonia	200
Reunion	750	Saudi Arabia	5,000
Suriname	100	Tunisia	1,000
USSR	500	Venezuela	200

AFRICA 1,000

(Angola, Burkina, Cameroon, Cape Verde Islands, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Zaire)

CARIBBEAN 2,000

(Guadeloupe, Martinique, Netherlands Antilles)

MIDDLE EAST 5,000

(Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Muscat, Qatar, United Arab Emirates)

For more information call Paul Cummins, (202) 382-9240, or L.T. McElvain, (202) 447-6225.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

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USDA ANNOUNCES 11TH CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM SIGNUP PROVISIONS

WASHINGTON, June 21—Provisions for the eleventh Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) signup, July 8-19, were announced today by Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan.

Madigan reminded producers the July CRP signup will be their only opportunity to offer bids that will be applicable to the 1992 crop year and that acreage accepted based upon these bids will be limited to approximately 1.1 million acres.

Acreage offered for enrollment must be land-planted or considered planted to produce an agricultural commodity in two of the five crop years from 1986 through 1990. The cropping-history requirement may be considered met, under certain circumstances, with cropland planted to alfalfa and other multi-year grasses and legumes grown in rotation and also in connection with acreage designated either as Acreage Conservation Reserve or Conservation Use for Pay during those five years.

Many provisions which applied to the 10th CRP signup held this spring are applicable to the July signup, Madigan said.

“Under the CRP, the estimated environmental benefits obtained per dollar of cost to the Commodity Credit Corporation are evaluated when bids are considered,” Madigan said.

“Therefore, producers should not rely on bid amounts which have been accepted in previous sign-ups since each producer’s bid is compared to the productivity capability of the acres offered,” he said. “Producers who wish to enroll acreage in the CRP should be aware that there is increased competition.”

The provisions of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 have expanded land eligibility requirements from past years to include not only highly erodible land, but also other cropland acreage which reduces the impairment of water quality or improves public wellhead protection. Special consideration will be given to designated hydrologic unit areas, which are determined to be a source of water quality problems, and designated conservation priority areas.

In addition to increasing water quality benefits under CRP, practices requiring useful-life easements of 15 or 30 years such as filterstrips, sod waterways, shelterbelts and contour grass strips also are given special consideration in the bid evaluation process.

“The 1990 Act establishes a Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) under which wetlands may be enrolled in the program. Details of this program will be announced if appropriations to carry out the program become available,” Madigan said. “Because wetlands will be eligible for inclusion in the WRP, certain wetlands will not be eligible for enrollment into the CRP during the 11th signup.”

CRP bids submitted in connection with the July sign-up will be accepted only for 1992 contracts. Bid acceptance determinations will be made after a nationwide review and evaluation. A bid is not binding on either the producer or CCC until the contract is signed by both parties.

Fifty percent cost-share assistance will continue to be available to establish approved permanent vegetative cover, including trees, on the accepted acreage. Annual rental payments for 10-15 years, depending upon the cover established, will be paid to CRP participants based upon accepted bid amounts.

Further details are available to producers at their county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices.

Approximately 34.5 million acres of eligible land have been accepted into the CRP through the 10th sign-up.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, June 25—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 9.63 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 8.64 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 8.65 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.81 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

- long grain, \$5.90 per hundredweight;
- medium grain, \$5.32 per hundredweight;
- short grain, \$5.24 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled announcement will be made July 2 at 3 p.m. EDT, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-7923

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EXTENSION PROVIDES FUNDING FOR EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS ON THE AFRICANIZED HONEYBEE

WASHINGTON, June 25—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Extension Service has provided \$45,000 in special needs funding to the Texas Agricultural Extension Service to produce educational materials on the Africanized honeybee.

The first Africanized honeybee swarm to migrate naturally into the United States from Mexico was trapped near Hidalgo, Tex., in October 1990. Since then, a number of swarms have been trapped along the southern Texas border.

"This new funding will help expand USDA's public education and health awareness program already in progress along the U.S.-Mexico border," said Dr. Myron D. Johnsrud, administrator of USDA's Extension Service. "We'll be producing the educational materials in both Spanish and English, and those materials will be targeted to reach children and the elderly."

These materials, including videotapes and publications, will be used in Texas and made available for use in Arizona, New Mexico, and other states as the migration of the Africanized honeybee continues.

According to Rick Gomez, manager of agriculture environmental programs for the Extension Service, the Africanized bee is considered to be more defensive and better adapted to a warmer, more tropical climate than the milder-mannered Europeanized bees which have historically inhabited the Americas.

"The Africanized bee is more easily angered than its Europeanized cousins and—although its venom is no more poisonous—more of them will attack if aroused," he said.

In addition to this special needs funding, Extension continues to conduct education programs on the Africanized honeybee around the country, aimed at agricultural producers and beekeepers.

Tom Willis (202) 447-2047

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MADIGAN NAMES MEMBERS TO NATIONAL DAIRY BOARD

WASHINGTON, June 25—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced the appointment of two new members to the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board.

Newly appointed are Harold Todd Arant, Bowman, S.C., (region 10); and Patricia Kay Zeosky, Turin, N.Y., (region 12), to complete the terms left vacant by the death of Gerald L. Aycock (region 10) and the resignation of Thomas L. Snyder (region 12). The appointees will complete the three-year terms which began May 1, 1989 and expire April 30, 1992.

The National Dairy Promotion and Research Board, composed of 36 dairy farmers, was established by the Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983 to develop and administer a coordinated program of promotion, research and nutrition education. The board is authorized to design programs to strengthen the dairy industry's position in domestic and foreign markets.

The national program is financed by a mandatory 15-cent per hundredweight assessment on all milk produced in the contiguous 48 states and marketed commercially by dairy farmers. USDA's Agriculture Marketing Service monitors the operations of the Board.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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COMMENTS SOUGHT ON GIVING COTTON IMPORTERS MEMBERSHIP ON THE COTTON BOARD

WASHINGTON, June 25—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking comment on a proposal to allow cotton importers membership on the Cotton Board, the cotton industry committee that administers the national cotton research and promotion program.

“The rules need to be modified to allow importers to sit on the board,” said Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service.

Haley said the proposal reflects 1990 Farm Bill authorization of assessment of imported cotton and cotton products. The proceeds would be remitted to the Cotton Board, as in the case of domestic cotton, and would fund the board’s program. The assessments would be contingent on the outcome of a future referendum in which producers and importers vote on whether to extend the assessments to cotton imports.

Notice of the proposal to allow cotton importers representation on the Cotton Board will appear in the June 27 Federal Register. Comments, postmarked on later than July 12, should be sent to Craig Shackelford, Cotton Division, AMS, USDA, rm. 2641-S, P.O. box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090. Copies of the notice are available from that office, telephone (202) 447-2259.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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MADIGAN ANNOUNCES NEW FOREST SERVICE ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL FORESTRY

WASHINGTON, June 26—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan announced today he has established an Office of International Forestry Programs to coordinate U.S. assistance in protecting the productivity and ecology of the world’s forest resources.

“Around the world millions of people are directly dependent upon forests for economic well being,” Madigan said. “The world’s forests also are critical to the global environment as a whole. With the establishment of this new office, we are creating a way for U.S. research and technical expertise to help other nations manage their forests for longterm sustainability and productive use.”

Madigan also announced he has chosen Jeff Sirmon to direct the new office, which will be located in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. Sirmon will serve as the Forest Service's deputy chief for international forestry. He formerly was the agency's deputy chief for programs and legislation.

The Forest Service conducts international forestry activities with a total budget of about \$18 million. Of this amount, about \$9 million is allocated for tropical forestry technical assistance; \$5 million for internationally focused research; \$3 million for cooperative work with the U.S. Agency for International Development programs such as disaster assistance; and \$1 million to facilitate scientific and technical exchanges.

With its leadership capacity, Madigan said, the Office of International Forestry Programs will coordinate the activities of these four programs and focus their overall efforts towards protecting world forest resources.

The new office also will cooperate with the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development in delivering research and technical assistance in forestry to foreign governments.

Program activities of the new international forestry office will be fourfold: providing educational assistance in forest management; conducting cooperative research; providing direct forest management assistance; and providing international leadership in protecting forest resources. All of these activities will be conducted in cooperation with participating foreign governments, and with associated U.S. and international agencies and private organizations.

One of the first goals of the office will be to expand technological forestry assistance and training for tropical forestry countries. Madigan said this will focus attention where the rates of forest losses are the greatest and where assistance is most needed.

Madigan said, "The facts speak for themselves: Almost a billion people live in forests in developing nations. More people depend on firewood than petroleum products for energy. In these areas of the world, forest productivity is vital to society itself.

"As increased population and development puts pressure on forest resources in these countries, the United States—world leader in forest management and research for a century—is committed to helping find solutions that support a balance of economic viability of forest use and the preservation of the world's forests for future generations."

John Denne (202) 475-3774

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